Statewide Freight Planning in Minnesota:

An Evolving Partnership with the Shipping Community in Minnesota

by
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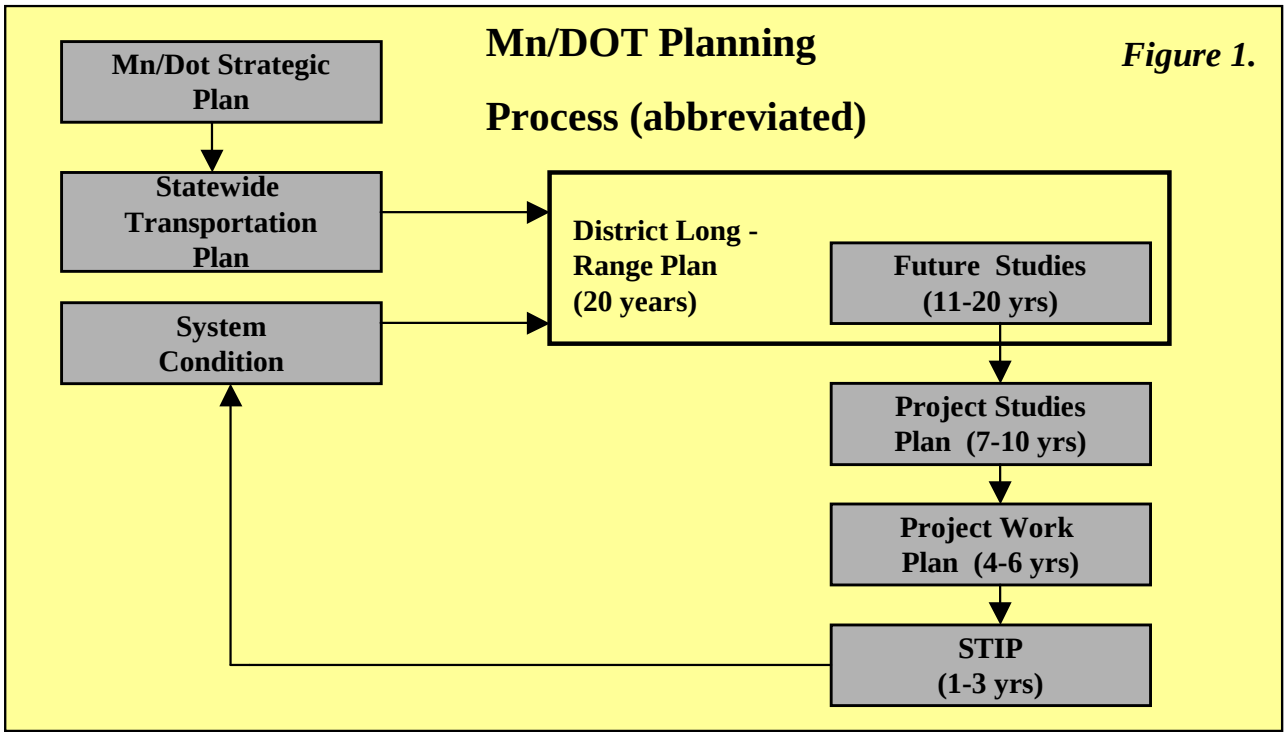
A. Background

Historically, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) has dealt with freight issues within the context of individual modes. And, as is common in the U.S., highways have dominated Mn/DOT's agenda for goods movements for many decades. During the 1980's and early 90's, government-sponsored advisory committees comprised of trucking industry representatives were used by Mn/DOT to get reaction to legislative proposals and regulatory policy, discuss infrastructure concerns, and explore ways to provide better customer service. Motor carrier advisory groups however were not key inputs to the overall transportation planning and investment process.

Before discussing planning initiatives specific to freight, it may be helpful to first provide an overview of the broader transportation planning process that exists today in Mn/DOT. ***Figure 1*** graphically depicts a simplified flow of the process that begins with Mn/DOT's Strategic Plan. Along with a vision and mission, the Strategic Plan establishes three strategic directions:

- **Safeguard what exists:** Mn/DOT's strongest commitment is to existing transportation systems.
- **Make the network operate better:** Mn/DOT will help increase Minnesota's economic competitiveness by improving transportation systems.
- **Make Mn/DOT operate better:** Mn/DOT will continuously improve management of its resources.



From Mn/DOT's Strategic Directions flow four Strategic Objectives that guide planning and policy decisions. These Strategic Objectives are provided here in an abbreviated format:

- **Multimodal Transportation:** To increase travel options that enhance economic vitality of the state; provide safe, timely, and efficient movement of people and goods.

- **Delivering Programs:**
  - Highway Construction – to modernize, streamline, and expedite the system by which construction projects are processed from programming through completion of construction.
  - Highway Maintenance – to provide maintenance services that are customer driven, competitive, and demonstrate national leadership in technology, research, and performance measurement.
  - Modal Programs System Support and Promotion – to ensure that programs focused on transit, air, rail, waterways, and other functions continue to promote and support the mission of developing a coordinated transportation network.

- **Interregional Corridors:** To ensure that Minnesota corridors of statewide significance link with Regional Trade Centers to a) enhance the economic vitality of the state; b) provide a base level of access to all Regional Trade Centers; and c) provide safe, timely, and efficient movement of people and goods.

- **Information:** To ensure Mn/DOT is a trusted source of transportation information essential for decision making by a variety of customers both internal and external, public and private.

The Minnesota Statewide Transportation Plan: Mn/DOT produced the first "*Minnesota Statewide Transportation Pla*n" in 1997. An addendum to the 1997 plan; "*Moving Minnesota from 2000 to 2020"* was published in January 2000 (this document can be viewed on-line at http://www.oim.dot.state.mn.us/PDPA/Plan.html). The next update to the State Plan will occur in 2003. Statewide Transportation Plans are policy documents that establish decision frameworks that guide long range planning activities. The Statewide Plan does not recommend specific investments, but rather establishes the rules that are to be used by Mn/DOT districts, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and other transportation entities in developing specific project or investment plans The most recent *"Moving Minnesota"* plan established the following investment principles to be used in the development of district plans:

- **Focus on System Performance** – Investments that maintain the transportation system will achieve desired outcomes based on identified, quantifiable, department-wide performance measures.
- **Ensure Economic Efficiency** – Investments that expand the capacity of the transportation system are warranted when the benefits to freight and passenger customers and the state's economy exceed the cost of the investment.
- **Support Societal Goals** – Investments will respond to societal and environmental concerns, provide communities an enhanced quality of life, and leave a lasting legacy for Minnesotans.

An interim update to the State Transportation Plan will occur in 2003 and will report on progress made toward addressing two of Mn/DOT's strategic objectives: 1) Multimodal transportation and 2) Interregional Corridors.

Each district works with Area Transportation Partnerships (ATPs) and/or Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in producing district plans. Each of Mn/DOT's seven out state districts and the Metropolitan Division have established ATP's comprised of representatives from metropolitan, regional, county, city, and Indian tribal governments in addition to other transportation interests. ATPs begin with a regional funding "target" and then integrate state and local priorities. The outcome of the ATP process is a recommendation for district transportation investments for a three-year transportation improvement program (TIP). In urban areas of 50,000 people or more, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) have been established as required by federal law. MPOs are responsible for coordinating transportation planning activities and preparing Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) for their areas.

Each district now has a long-range plan that gives future direction for the highway system. The next step will be to update District plans by incorporating modal considerations and developing ways to create interrelated transportation systems. The 2003 update will incorporate these plans to produce a multimodal transportation plan.

B. Getting Freight on the Agenda

Following the passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991, senior Mn/DOT management desired a more proactive, multi-modal approach to freight transportation issues. In 1994 the department formed a Freight Policy Team that met several times before recommending the creation of a Freight Policy Section in the Office of Research Services. In 1995 this Freight Policy Section moved briefly to the Office of Investment Management before officially announcing a "Freight Logistics Initiative" in 1996. With the announcement the Office of Railroads and Waterways added "Freight" to its name, and the Freight Section found its current home base. The new initiative defined its mission around bringing freight into the mainstream of Mn/DOT's planning and investment process: "To insure the incorporation of freight transportation needs in Mn/DOT's planning, development and operations to optimize transportation investments."

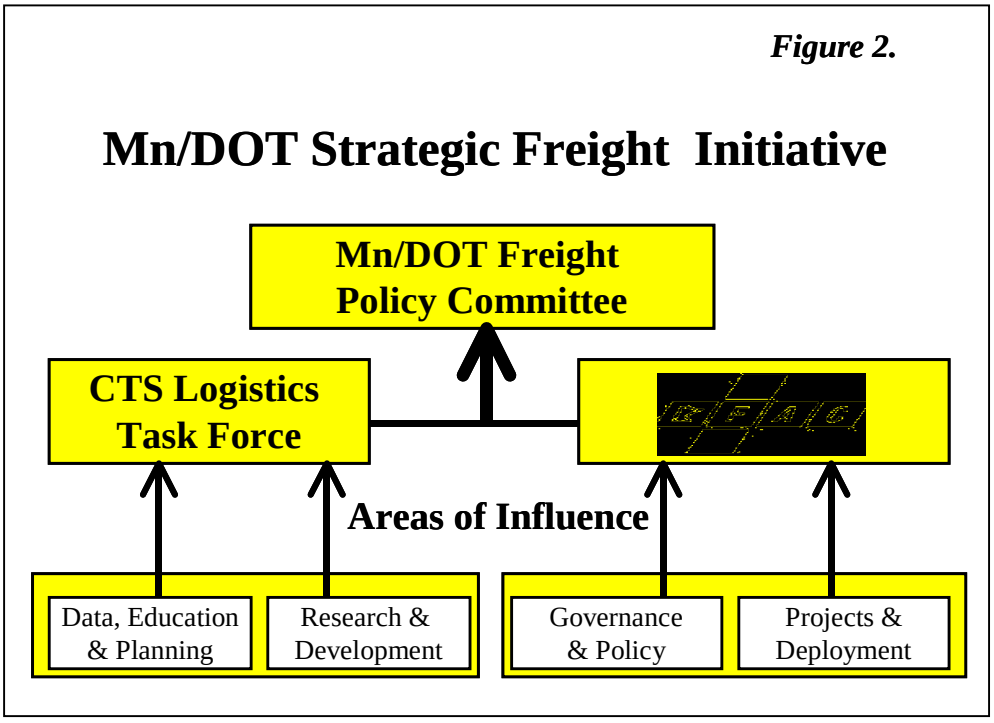
After an uneasy start it was apparent that freight movements and the demands created by modern supply chain logistics had become a focal point of the department's vision for the future of Minnesota's transportation system. Since its inception the Mn/DOT freight initiative has been about shippers – i.e. businesses reliant on transportation systems to access raw materials and get finished products to consumer markets. Modal operators and third party modal integrators who provide services to shippers are also significant customer groups of freight initiative activities.

In January 1998, Mn/DOT hosted "Breaking the Barriers" a workshop to identify public and private actions to enhance freight transportation productivity. The workshop was attended by shippers from around Minnesota and laid the groundwork for a continuing dialogue with many of the state's major businesses.

Also in 1998, the department formed two key committees to raise the visibility of freight concerns in the planning and investment process. The Freight Investment Committee (FIC) is an internal policy committee comprised of senior Mn/DOT managers, and chaired by the Deputy Commissioner/Chief Engineer. The FIC adopted the structure depicted as ***Figure 2*** below to help guide department investment decisions that support goods movements in Minnesota. The Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee (MFAC) is a largely private sector group of senior logistics professionals representing major shippers and carriers from across Minnesota. The MFAC chair is former Minnesota Congressman Tim Penny. Creation of the MFAC grew out of activities started by the Freight Stakeholders Coalition sponsored by the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce. During 1997 and 1998 the Coalition held freight stakeholder forums around the state to discuss issues of concern:

> "A key goal of the freight forums was to clarify the role of government. The top three roles were defined as (1) research, (2) education and awareness, and (3) partnership development…Many private sector participants were concerned about the lack of coordination between modes and between agencies. The public sector was equally concerned about the lack of freight information available to conduct freight planning and programs. Both agreed that the general public is unaware of the role and importance of freight to Minnesota's economy."[1]

Figure 2.



Based on what they heard during the forum sessions, the Minnesota Chamber approached Mn/DOT with the idea of creating a statewide advisory committee on freight and logistics issues. Former Commissioner James Denn acted upon the request in April of 1998 at the "Impacts of Logistics on the Upper Midwest Economy" a special symposium sponsored by the University of Minnesota's Center for Transportation Studies. During his speech Commissioner Denn announced that the department would form a freight advisory committee: "to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and issues between Mn/DOT and the private sector to develop and promote a safe, reliable, efficient and environmentally responsible freight transportation system for the state." The Commissioner also set forth three strategic goals for the MFAC:

1. Ensure the movement of goods is addressed in planning, research, investment and operations of Minnesota's transportation system.

2. Establish measures of Minnesota's freight transportation system, and measure freight system performance.

3. Communicate freight investment and policy issues supporting the economic vitality of Minnesota businesses to the public, elected officials and other public entities.

C. Establishing a Relationship with Shippers – Some First Steps

The MFAC formalized the ad hoc partnerships between private sector freight interests and public sector transportation officials that began following ISTEA. Since the first meeting in November 1998, the MFAC has provided a forum for the exchange of information. Mn/DOT and the Metropolitan Council have educated private sector members about the transportation planning process; and, provided opportunities for shippers to give opinions and suggestions in various areas of transportation policy. Here are some highlights from the first two years of MFAC:

- ***The Minnesota Statewide Freight Flows Study (The Executive Summary can be accessed at http://www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/freight.html):*** Using project suggestions from the *Minnesota Freight Forum* as a starting point, MFAC members recommended as a first priority that Mn/DOT conduct a statewide freight flows study. Mn/DOT's Freight Policy Committee asked that an RFP be developed and provided $200,000 to conduct the study. The study completed in April 2000, was conducted by a consulting team lead by Cambridge Systematics. Significant findings from the study included:

Figure 3. Total Freight Flows - Minnesota (in tons)

  - Nearly 400 million tons or $350 billion of goods move through Minnesota each year.
  - Minnesota is a key production state that exports 50% more than it imports. It is the ninth largest exporting state by weight, following only Illinois and the large coal and oil producing states.
  - Logistics trends are placing increased strain on Minnesota's roadway infrastructure, already under pressure from strong economic growth.

- Urban congestion is causing delays that increase the cost of shipping by truck and hurt the competitive position of Minnesota.
- Large railroads are consolidating their operations and using heavier rail cars, which may in turn threaten the viability of some short-line railroads.
- The major challenge to waterborne transportation is the relative complacency and stagnation of a system that works well, but is now threatened by noncommercial urban development and significant investments in foreign waterway systems.

- ***Freight Performance Measures – A Yardstick for Minnesota's Freight Transportation System (this report is also accessible at http://www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/freight.html)***: Facilitated small group discussions during MFAC meetings resulted in a series of proposed freight performance measures. Most important to the shipping community is predictable travel times, which also ranks high among commuters, especially in the Metro Area. Mn/DOT senior management has formally adopted several key freight measures in the Department's family of measures:
  - Metro freeway travel times, by route and time of day
  - Average speed on Metro freeways by route and time of day
  - Congestion ranking of Metro freeways, by route
  - Congestion as compared to other major metropolitan areas
  - Benefit – cost ratio of major state transportation projects
  - State transportation investment and spending as a percent of Gross State Product

  Additional measures were identified by the MFAC for which Mn/DOT does not currently collect data. Several projects addressing the data issues associated with additional freight measures are just getting underway.

- ***Research:*** With input from MFAC members three research problem statements were developed: Two have been funded through a Mn/DOT partnership with the U of M, Center for Transportation Studies and a third through a multi-state pooled fund process administered by the U.S. DOT. The three research projects that resulted from MFAC input are:

  - ***"***The Feasibility of a Shipper Panel to Measure Transportation Services." The study is to be conducted under the direction of Dr. Fred Beier, University of Minnesota (UM), Carlson School of Management. The project is scheduled to begin on 9/00 with a 6- month duration. Funded by Mn/DOT.

  - "Minnesota Intermodal Freight Access Study" (Dr. Beier) Scheduled to begin 9/00 with a 9-month duration. Funded by the Center for Transportation Studies.

  - "The Impact of the ISO9000 Quality Assurance Standard on Safety Performance in the Trucking Industry." This study will be conducted under the direction of Dr. Alfred Marcus, UM, Carlson School of Management. The project will begin 9/00 with a 12-month duration. The project is being underwritten with funds pooled from Minnesota, Montana, New York, Texas and Washington.

- ***Incorporating Freight Into Program Delivery:*** MFAC members from the metropolitan area assisted the Mn/DOT Metropolitan Division develop a "Freight Scorecard" for the I-694 improvements scheduled to begin next year.

- ***Forums to Exchange Information:*** Opportunities were provided to exchange ideas with regional and national transportation planning organizations, including: The Heartland Freight Coalition of Kansas City, The Northern Great Plains Rural Development Commission, and Federal Highway Administration, Office of Freight Policy and Management. Outreach activities also included a field tour of the Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport construction program, and an invitation to Legislators and staff to attend an MFAC meeting. The next meeting in October 2000, will include a field tour of the recent Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Network (CVISN) technology installation at the St. Croix Weight Station.

The ultimate success of the MFAC partnership resides in its ability to influence transportation investments and policies that support the state's business economy. Currently the MFAC exists largely outside the mainstream planning process, and funding is aimed primarily at highway improvement. However, the inclusion of freight concerns in the planning process is slowly gaining momentum. Building on that momentum and establishing freight considerations into the mainstream planning process is the next major challenge of the Freight Initiative in Mn/DOT.

C. Setting an Agenda: Future Directions and New Alliances

Over the next two years complementary internal and external strategies will be pursued to continue emphasizing the importance of goods movement to our transportation systems.

Figure 4. Freight Facilities Database Screen

Internal Strategies: As previously discussed, District planners are being asked to produce transportation plans with a greater emphasis on all modes. The Freight Section in OFRW is the focal point for integrating freight interests into department policy, planning and operations. To assist district planners, the Section is concentrating its efforts on developing a "freight facilities database." The freight facilities database project grew out of the ISTEA requirement for an intermodal management system (IMS). One element of the IMS system was to be an inventory of intermodal facilities. Mn/DOT decided to go beyond the original IMS requirements and include an inventory and database of all major freight generators

or receivers (see example screen in ***Figure 4***).
The freight facilities database will provide information in geographic information system (GIS) formats for a variety of facility types that either produce, receive, store and/or transfer freight, including the following types of terminals:

- Lake and river
- Airfreight
- Rail/truck Intermodal
- Pipeline
- Truck
- Manufacturing and retail facilities
- Wholesale/distribution warehouses
- Agricultural elevators, ethanol plants, etc.

When complete the database is intended to support planning and investment decisions by enabling the following types of analysis:

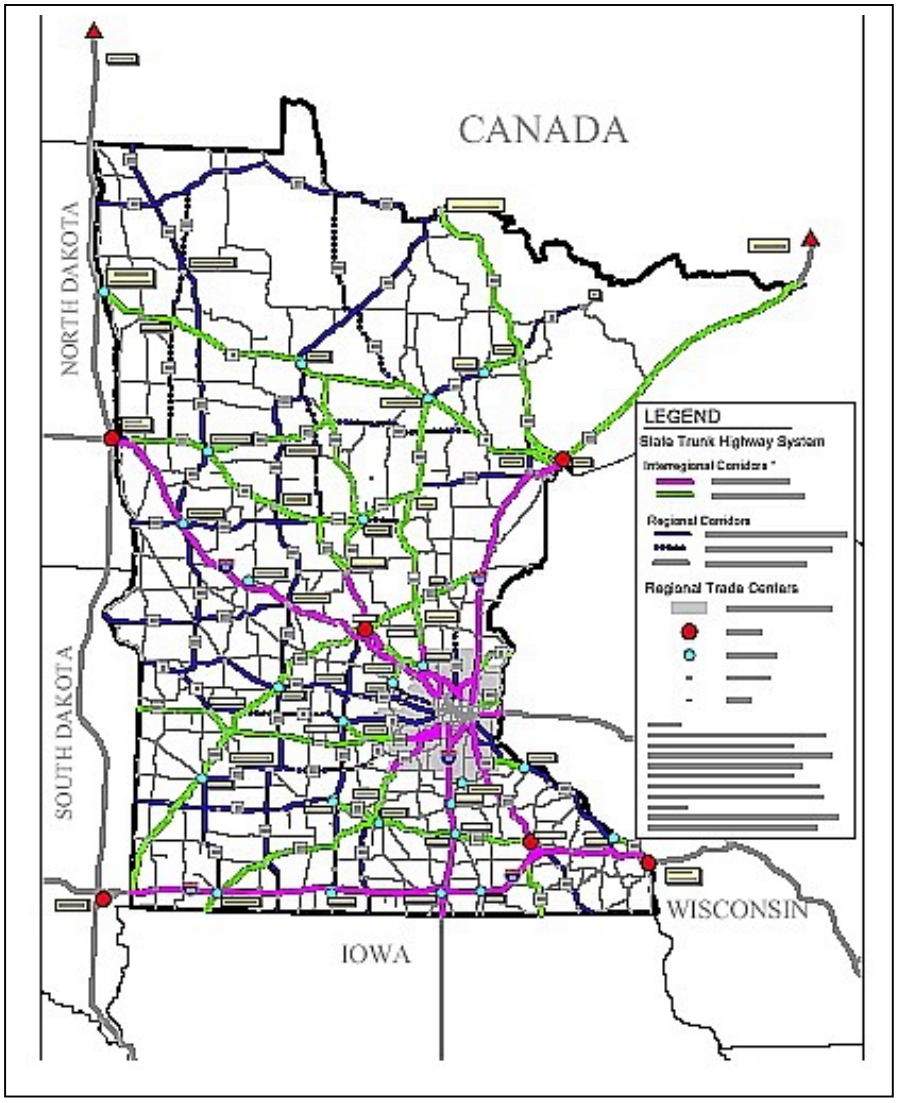
- ✓ Commodity flow modeling
- ✓ Corridor-level planning and analysis.
- ✓ Freight infrastructure need analysis
- ✓ Mapping and GIS applications to better visualize the location and proximity of freight facilities to the transportation infrastructure.

External Strategies: During this past summer the MFAC convened an Executive Team that met several times with Chairman Tim Penny to devise a two year strategic plan for continued movement toward a more integrated planning process that fully considers freight across all modes. The strategic plan will establish a two-year program agenda for the MFAC, and will present options to the full membership for projects that support MFAC's three strategic goals. Among the options that will be presented to the full membership at the fall meeting:

Identify Freight Bottlenecks on Minnesota's Interregional Corridors – As previously cited in the background section, one of Mn/DOT's four strategic objectives is to develop an interregional corridor system that enhances economic vitality of the state by providing safe, timely, and efficient movement of people and goods to regional trade centers.[*] Mn/DOT completed an Interregional Corridor Study in October 1999. The goal of the study is to proactively manage the important connections between regional trade centers in a more cost effective manner. The study identified a system of interregional corridors based on community use and traffic volumes (Figure 5).

[*] A model of Regional Trade Centers (RTCs) in the Upper Midwest was developed by the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Rural Affairs (CURA) in the 1960's and updated in 1990 and 1999. The model defines and eight-level hierarchy of places, with metropolitan areas at the top and hamlets at the base. The hierarchy is based on population and the number and diversity of businesses.

Figure 5. Interregional Corridors



A major objective in the management of interregional corridors is to maintain travel times between trade centers. Travel speed is also consistent with the desire expressed by shippers for predictable travel times.

Bottleneck removal is another strategy that Mn/DOT is employing in the congested urban areas. However, currently bottleneck definitions do not extend beyond traffic constraints. After ISTEA, Mn/DOT began developing the Intermodal Management System. As part of that effort, market research was conducted to identify productivity bottlenecks for goods movements in Minnesota across all modes. As a result, issues such as bridge and pavement restrictions, height restrictions, at-grade rail crossings, port access restrictions and a host of other impediments were identified. The MFAC Executive Team will recommend that the MFAC work to refine and prioritize the list of "freight bottlenecks" and that these impediments be considered by Mn/DOT as the districts move forward with corridor management plans.

Highlight Mn/DOT Districts and Modes: Currently the MFAC meets four times throughout the year and meeting agendas react to timely issues. A concern since forming the MFAC, has been Mn/DOT's ability to hold the attention of a diverse, statewide membership. While Mn/DOT's Metropolitan Division has been actively engaged in freight planning and with the MFAC, to date there is little involvement by out-state districts at MFAC meetings. To help achieve some buy-in to shipper issues it is being suggested that each meeting highlight a different district or area of the state. Highways have also dominated MFAC agendas to date, so in addition to showcasing geographic regions, meetings would have a rotating a modal

theme. Finally, because some regions and modes simply have more issues that may need attention than time allows, it is being recommended that the MFAC entertain an openness to either permanent or ad hoc subcommittees or task forces. Currently the Metropolitan Council and Mn/DOT's Metropolitan Division are constructing a proposal for a permanent MFAC Metro Subcommittee.

Seek Opportunities for Applied Research – The UM Center for Transportation Studies (CTS) and Mn/DOT enjoy a strong research partnership. Over the past decade and more University faculty have conducted numerous studies impacting goods movement policy. Less emphasis has been given to applied research outside of the ITS environment. Recently however the CTS Logistics Task Force restructured and created three new subcommittees. The Research Subcommittee has met several times and is working toward research proposals to demonstrate driver fatigue monitoring systems and exploring ways of reducing sulfur emissions in bio-diesel fuels. The Research Subcommittee has drafted a statement of purpose and established several goals in support of CTS and the MFAC:

- **Purpose:** Identify, frame and guide transportation related research that supports industry and government efforts to:
  - Eliminate supply chain bottlenecks through cost effective infrastructure development, the introduction of new technology or changes in public policy.
  - Demonstrate technologies that can reduce logistics costs and/or improve transportation safety.
  - Originate research that supports the mission of the CTS Logistics Taskforce and Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee**.**

- **Goals:**
  - Provide Minnesota businesses a competitive advantage in transporting goods to regional, national and global markets.
  - Provide Minnesota citizens a high quality of life by advancing safety and environmentally friendlier means of moving goods

The Research Subcommittee will continue to tap into the MFAC for guidance and direction, and will also seek opportunities to leverage public/private partnerships to fund and conduct transportation research.

Expanding Transportation Financing Options – Financing availability is currently an impediment to the implementation of a more multimodal planning and investment process. Minnesota currently has three programs available beyond the state's traditional trunk highway funding, but each has limitations:

- **Minnesota Rail Service Improvement Program (MRSI)** – A capital improvement loan program administered through the Office of Freight Railroads and Waterways. The purpose of the program is to preserve and improve rail service, and assist rail users in improving the efficiency of their rail transportation. Funds are available for projects such as rail rehabilitation, expanding industrial spurs, adding storage and

transfer capacity of an elevator, increasing load efficiency and capability and other projects that will increase rail usage.

- **Port Development Assistance Program** - This program was developed by the state in response to the needs of the commercial navigation system. No federal funds are currently available for such projects. The program provides a funding source that facilitates compliance with more stringent environmental standards, helps to ensure the continued commercial effectiveness of lake and river navigation systems, and helps to offset the increases in general costs of commercial shipping. Project proposals are prioritized based upon need, employment generated and overall economic benefit. OFRW, in conjunction with the state's port authorities, identifies potential harbor improvement projects.

- **Transportation Revolving Loan Fund (TRLF)** - Provides loans and various forms of loan guarantees for highway and transit capital improvements. Entities that may apply include cities, counties and other government entities.

Historically, the Rail Service Improvement and Port Development Programs were funded through general obligation bonds. In 2000, the Minnesota Legislature allocated $5 million to the Rail Service Improvement Program, and $2 million to the Port Development Program using General Fund appropriations. The TRLF is a state infrastructure bank program established under the 1995 National Highway System Act. In June 1997, Minnesota was designated a "SIB State" by the federal government and received federal incentive funds ($3.96 million) to capitalize the TRLF. All federal funds deposited into the TRLF require the concurrent deposit of a non-federal match of 25% of the federal contribution.

Each of the above alternative financing programs is limited by resource and eligibility requirements. During strategy discussions, the MFAC Executive Team examined financing programs offered by some of Minnesota's neighboring states. One of particular interest is Wisconsin's Transportation Economic Assistance Program (TEA). "The TEA program provides 50% state grants to governing bodies, private businesses and consortiums for road, rail, harbor and airport projects that are necessary to help attract employers to Wisconsin, or to encourage business and industry to remain and expand in Wisconsin."[2] As the MFAC matures it may recommend more flexible financing such as Wisconsin's TAP program.

D. Conclusions

The Mn/DOT Freight Initiative has achieved some early success in partnering with the business community through the formation of the Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee, one of the few statewide shipper advisory groups currently in the U.S. Mn/DOT has also laid the groundwork for integrating freight into the planning process by completing a Statewide Freight Flows Study and developing freight performance measures, however challenges remain in coordinating efforts and getting buy-in at the district level. Recently the department created a new position of Modal Operations Director that should assist in coordinating modal efforts to support district planning. Significant challenges also exist in developing and maintaining the data resources that will enable truly integrated multimodal freight planning.

As described in this paper, in the two years since the formation of the MFAC extensive time has been devoted to climbing private and public learning curves regarding different approaches to transportation. Private sector members have had to learn about public transportation planning processes, and public sector members have been introduced to supply chain management. The MFAC is now poised for action and is developing a strategic plan to guide its activities over the next two-year period. The next scheduled MFAC meeting is October 27, 2000. The draft strategic plan will be reviewed and submitted to the membership for adoption. The plan proposes four areas of "action strategies" to advance its goals:

ACTION STRATEGY - 1: Integrating Freight into Transportation Planning:

Focus on Freight Bottlenecks:

- ✓ Revisit freight bottleneck categories identified in previous market research (and those identified by other states) to refine and prioritize examples of freight impediments that should be considered by Mn/DOT in corridor management plans. (January 2001 meeting).

- ✓ Approve a priority ranking of freight bottlenecks along with recommendations to Mn/DOT about how freight bottlenecks be identified at a local or regional level (if current data does not exist) and how freight be included in programming decisions for investments on Interregional Corridors. (March 2001 meeting).

- ✓ Review IRC freight bottleneck results and Mn/DOT's investment response (Jan. 2002).

ACTION STRATEGY - 2: Taking Freight and Logistics Research to the Frontline:

Partner on Applied Research to Benefit Industry:

- ✓ Hold annual "problem identification" sessions during an MFAC meeting to solicit potential ideas for logistics research pertinent to MFAC members. (May 2001 2002)

- ✓ Entertain a proposal to form a private/public research consortium at the May 2001 meeting. The purpose of this consortium would be to:

    - o Support a logistics research website at CTS to provide updates of on-going research related to logistics/freight at public research institutions in the region and worldwide. A freight research homepage could also channel electronic feedback and provide a conduit for identifying new research ideas/needs and new applications for existing research.
    - o A research consortium could also use private seed money to leverage research on freight topics, as many federal research programs seek matching funds, typically at an 80/20 level.

ACTION STRATEGY - 3: Exploring Options to Expand Multi-Modal Infrastructure

A Focus on Corridors: Leveraging Federal Financing Programs:

- ✓ Work through CTS to collect data and conduct trade corridor analyses highlighting the importance of the I-94 corridor to the economy of Minnesota. (Completion date of January 2002).

- ✓ Sponsor a multi-jurisdictional symposium of entities in support of the I-94 trade corridor concept. The forum could be used to present regional members of Congress the justification for a "corridor of national significance" designation in the next highway reauthorization act.

ACTION STRATEGY - 4: Communicating Freight Needs to Support Economic Vitality.

- ✓ Use ad hoc taskforces and/or standing subcommittees with MFAC as an umbrella organization, to extend involvement without creating an excessively large parent committee. The Metropolitan Council has also suggested in its recent Transportation Policy Plan that the MFAC be the umbrella organization for a standing subcommittee of Metropolitan Area shippers that would provide advice and guidance to the Council's Transportation Advisory Board.

- ✓ Involve local Chambers of Commerce and Mn/DOT Districts in MFAC meetings and regional presentations about the MFAC.

- ✓ Create an MFAC Marketing Plan. Some colleges and university marketing programs offer assistance to non-profit and government groups as hands-on experience for students. The University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN for example offers a non-profit marketing course that requires student groups to develop a marketing plan for a real organization as a class requirement.

- ✓ Strengthen the relationship between the MFAC transportation committee members from the Minnesota Legislature. Host an annual event for legislators and involve legislative staff in mailings and meetings.

- ✓ Seek opportunities to host MFAC meetings at private facilities. The May 2000 meeting held at the MSP air cargo facility of Federal Express provided a true hands-on type of learning experience for public and private MFAC members.

Minnesota is pursuing internal and external strategies to raise the visibility of freight and educate decision makers about the importance of goods movement to Minnesota's economy. Internal strategies will focus on developing good "freight planning tools" for practitioners, while external strategies will focus on logistics research, communicating important freight issues and developing a focus on trade corridors.

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[1] "Impacts of Logistics on the Upper Midwest Economy," A Special Symposium Report, April 22, 1998. The Center for Transportation Studies, and the Logistics Task Force, University of Minnesota. Pp. 5

[2] Wisconsin Internet Home Page – TEA Fact Sheet at: www.dot.state.wi.us/dtimm/bop/gati.html